

#134

R  
GRAHAM-CUBA

BY FRED S. HOFFMAN

WASHINGTON (AP) -- RETIRED LT. GEN. DANIEL GRAHAM, FORMER CHIEF OF THE DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE AGENCY, SAID TODAY SOME ANALYSTS SPOTTED EVIDENCE OF A SOVIET GROUND COMBAT FORCE IN CUBA SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.

"I KNOW SOME OF THEM KNEW, BUT I CAN'T SAY THAT THE PEOPLE WHO KNEW WERE ABLE TO CONVINCE THEIR COLLEAGUES," GRAHAM SAID IN AN INTERVIEW.

ALTHOUGH GRAHAM RETIRED IN 1975, HE IS KNOWN TO HAVE KEPT CLOSE CONTACT WITH FRIENDS STILL WORKING WITHIN THE INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY, WHICH INCLUDES THE CIA, THE NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS AS WELL AS DIA.

OTHER SOURCES SAID THERE WERE DIFFERENCES AMONG INTELLIGENCE OFFICIALS AS TO WHETHER THE RUSSIANS HAVE COMBAT TROOPS IN CUBA.

BUT EARLIER ADMINISTRATION STATEMENTS, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY SEN. RICHARD STONE, D-FLA., GAVE NO HINT THAT ANY HIGH-LEVEL CREDENCE WAS BEING PLACED ON REPORTS THAT RUSSIAN MILITARY FORCE IN CUBA INCLUDED GROUND FIGHTING ELEMENTS AND A COMMAND STRUCTURE.

STATE AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENT STATEMENTS TENDED TO STRESS THE ADVISORY NATURE OF SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL IN CUBA OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS.

GRAHAM SAID IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT THE RUSSIAN COMBAT TROOPS ARRIVED IN CUBA BY SHIP OVER A PERIOD OF TIME.

"THEY DIDN'T ALL COME IN A BATCH," GRAHAM SAID.

SINCE THE CUBAN ARMY IS ALMOST WHOLLY EQUIPPED WITH RUSSIAN-SUPPLIED WEAPONS AND VEHICLES, INTELLIGENCE SOURCES SAID IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN GEAR ASSIGNED TO THE CUBAN ARMY AND EQUIPMENT ATTACHED TO THE RUSSIAN UNIT, ESTIMATED AT BETWEEN 2,000 AND 3,000 MEN.

IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW THE ADMINISTRATION FINALLY CONVINCED ITSELF THAT A RUSSIAN COMBAT UNIT IS PRESENT IN CUBA.

SOURCES SAID THAT SHORTLY AFTER BECOMING PRESIDENT, CARTER HALTED ALL U.S. RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS OVER CUBA.

HE AUTHORIZED SEVERAL FLIGHTS BY THE AIR FORCE'S HIGHLY SOPHISTICATED SR-71 SPYPLANES LATE LAST YEAR WHEN U.S. OFFICIALS WERE ATTEMPTING TO DETERMINE WHETHER NEW SOVIET-BUILT MIG-23 FIGHTER PLANES BASED THERE WERE CAPABLE OF LAUNCHING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

ALTHOUGH THE UNITED STATES GATHERS INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION ON CUBA FROM SPY SATELLITES, GRAHAM INDICATED THAT RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT FLIGHTS WOULD BE MORE USEFUL IN THE PRESENT SITUATION BECAUSE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THEY ARE LESS HAMPERED BY CLOUD COVER.

THE PRESENCE OF A RELATIVELY SMALL SOVIET GROUND COMBAT UNIT IN CUBA IS NOT REGARDED IN ITSELF AS A THREAT, BUT GRAHAM AND SOME MILITARY OFFICIALS NOTED THAT IT IS THE LATEST IN A SERIES OF ACTIONS, INCLUDING THE PROVISION OF ADVANCED MIG-23S AND MODERN TURBO-PROP TRANSPORT PLANES, WHICH INDICATE TO THEM THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE STEPPING UP THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN CUBA.

AP-WX-0831 1748EDT

N135

DRONE CONTRACT

WASHINGTON (AP) -- THE ARMY ANNOUNCED TODAY THE AWARD OF A \$101 MILLION CONTRACT TO LOCKHEED MISSILE AND SPACE CO. INC. TO DESIGN AND DEVELOP A REMOTELY PILOTED VEHICLE THAT WILL CONDUCT AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE OF A BATTLEFIELD AND SELECT TARGETS FOR ARTILLERY AND MISSILES.

THE WORK WILL BE DONE AT LOCKHEED'S SUNNYVALE, CALIF., AND MARIETTA, GA., PLANTS, THE ARMY SAID.

AP-WX-0831 1749EDT

N136